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LATEST NEWS CONCERNING
the
ARMENIAN AND SYRIAN
SUFFERERS

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Since the appearance of the last Bulletin on the fifth of April the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief has received reports from its representatives in Turkey that hundreds of refugees in the Aleppo district are dying every day of starvation, and that many of the survivors have been forced to eat grass. To meet this desperate emergency, and to aid the Armenians to get their own living from the soil, the Committee is now engaged in a nation-wide campaign. With the co-operation of Ambassador Morgenthau, and in alliance with the Secretaries of the Laymen's Missionary Movement it is making every effort to give the full facts to the only nation that is now in position to render prompt and adequate assistance.

I. Winter in The Russian Caucasus

Hundreds of thousands of Armenians had to retreat into the Russian province of Transcaucasia when the Russian army evacuated the region of Van during July, 1915. Even before the Russians had penetrated so far into Turkey as Van the Armenian colony of that place had endured a twenty-eight day siege by Turkish troops, and fifty-five thousand had been massacred throughout that province. From this siege the Russian advance freed them, but after two months the Turks once more pushed forward, and the invading Russians were forced to retire, taking all the surviving Christians with them. While passing through the mountain defiles many were wounded by bands of Turks who attacked them, and all lost their possessions. So the throngs that poured down on Erivan, Kars, and Tiflis were not only homeless but starving and sick. For months the refugee waves continued to surge into the Caucasus. "Total Armenian refugees in the Caucasus, one hundred and seventy thousand," telegraphed the American consul at Tiflis, on Dec. 10, 1915. On the 4th of February, 1916, Dr. S. G. Wilson wrote from Erivan that there were 182,800 refugees in the Caucasus and 12,100 in the conquered districts of Turkey.

The chief centers for relief in the Russian Caucasus are Tiflis, Erivan and Etchmiadzin, towns of Russian Armenia taken from the Persians or from the Turks in or prior to 1873. At the headquarters in Tiflis there centres an American Commission to which belong Dr. Samuel G. Wilson, Mr. F. Willoughby Smith, American Consul

at Tiflis, Rev. Richard Hill, Rev. Frederick W. Macallum, and Mr. George P. Gracey, all of whom have their appointments under the American Red Cross. This staff has been strengthened by the sending of Floyd O. Smith, M. D., and William Cressy, M. D., to Tiflis. These two physicians sailed from New York early in March, and Dr. Cressy arrived in Tiflis about the first of May.

The American Commission has reported that it is in cordial co-operation with the other agencies at work among the multitudes of refugees. These include relief officially undertaken by the Russian Government, and by various Russian Committees, also extensive charities conducted under the supervision of the Patriarch of the Armenians in Russia. The Council of this prelate, the Supreme Patriarch and Katholikos of all Armenians, writes to the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief from Etchmiadzin, the Armenian Canterbury, on January 1, 1916 (new style). From this letter, published in translation in the "New Armenia," March 1, 1916, we quote the following passages:

"At their second retirement from Van in July, the Armenian residents were bereft of all their possessions—houses, agricultural implements, and domestic animals—at the same time having their homes burned up. In the literal sense of the word 100,000 to 120,000 Armenians arrived at Etchmiadzin stripped even of their outer garments. 35,000 to 40,000 of them were accommodated in Etchmiadzin.

"In Etchmiadzin alone 11,000 people died, and in the country round about it about 40,000 people died. Through the means that the local committee used the disease was gradually checked.

"From 5,000 to 6,000 orphans and exhausted and worn-out people found refuge in the orphanages. They were like skeletons in human form. Through our care today they are safe and sound in Etchmiadzin, Diphis, Baku, Erivan, Gharakilisa, and Ashtarak. We hope that they are destined to be the nucleus of the future Armenian nation."

From the Commission at Tiflis comes this report of relief work, dated Feb. 11, 1916:

"General Tamachef, chief of the Government Relief Committee in Transcaucasia, advised us that the greatest need among the refugees was for clothing and bedding. We accepted this suggestion which was altogether the most feasible for us. As neither our funds nor our organization was equal to covering the 23,000 square versts of Erivan Government, arrangements were made to concentrate our efforts for the most part on the districts of Novo Bayazid and Gagakh. These districts lie in the midst of the mountains, surrounding the beautiful Lake Gokhcha or Sevanga, itself 6,240 feet above sea-level. The need of the 20,000 refugees, there exposed to severe winter, appealed to the Committee, though the climate made their task more difficult. The fact that the villages lie from three to five days pull from the railroad either from Erivan or from Akstafa, near Tiflis, added to the difficulty. But furgeons—wagons somewhat like the old prairie-schooner—which carry about two tons, have the advantage of using the splendid military macadam roads which served Russia before railroads were spread over the Caucasus. These roads are familiar to the Persian missionaries for many of them have gone to and fro on them, making speed by relays of post horses. The same mode of conveyance helps the distributors from point to point.

"The condition of the refugees in the mountains, as voiced in reports and

the press, called loudly for help. I quote a few items.

"They are located in broken down houses, damp sheds, stalls and stables, where sickness is unavoidable for them, where the famished family lies upon the cold, damp earth, without any heat whatever. If this condition continues, half the refugees will die."

"Everywhere comes the cry of cold and hungry people, mostly women and children. Stoves, you may say, there are none. All are half naked. Mothers in despair have put aside their babies, unwilling to look upon their pale, livid limbs. Tears have dried from their eyes and words of complaint been silenced from their lips.

"In Gazakh the condition of the refugees is lacking in every good thing. There is no organization. Of 4,500, Armenians are 3,145; the rest are Nestorians who are sheltered in German and Russian villages. Conditions render one inconsolable. There are no stoves. Warm clothes or beds with few exceptions do not exist." "Flour and wood money come irregularly."

"Men and women from prosperous, comfortable homes have been reduced to dire poverty. They have been sleeping for months on the bare ground and shivering through the long nights. One man said to me, "I have not known what the smell of fire is this winter." Their endurance of cold is remarkable.

"Their task assigned, the Committee set to work immediately on the receipt of the telegram telling of the grant of funds and purchased in the market and made contracts for quick delivery of clothing and bedding. Mattresses and pillow slips by ten thousands were ordered which are to be filled with hay or straw. Clothing for all ages was prepared, not forgetting the little children who outnumber them all though 3,000 to 4,000 orphans are cared for in institutions which have been opened for them. The women exceed the men to the number of 19,000.

"Through the efforts of Consul Willoughby Smith the difficulties of transportation was overcome, the Government cordially granting freight-cars, though the demands of the army trans-

port are enormous. We have the benefit of the work of the Government and Armenian Committees who have listed and classified the refugees. We are acting in co-operation with but independently of them and with their cordial goodwill. The work is done systematically. Each province is divided into districts, each district into circuits; the principal village of each circuit is its center. Each head of a family had a paper telling his place of residence and the number, age and sex of his household. Whatever is given, as for example a garment or the amount of the bread allowance, 15 Kopeks or 5 cents per day for each mouth, is written on this paper. We have received from the Committees the census of the districts entrusted to us. In consequence of this thorough work, as soon as our supplies reach the circuit, we are ready to distribute them.

"Besides the mountain districts, we are also distributing in the district of Samaghar, on the plain overshadowed by Mt. Ararat. Here we had on our first tour of inspection, organized a local committee. This work is being done in a most systematic and conscientious manner. These garments have been cut out and made by the refugees themselves, partly in our own Erivan workshop. While by mutual agreement, the distribution of bedding and clothing has become our chief work, yet we are also assisting by providing special nourishment for the sick and convalescent, tools and outfits for artisans and to a certain extent soap, sugar, tea, etc.

"The tales of distress and need which have poured into our ears are heartrending, and the words of thanks and grateful prayers that are uttered would repay the givers of the funds could they hear gifts as if springs of gratitude had burst forth in their hearts. It is hard to keep them from kissing our hands as an oriental expression of their thanks. Surely it is a privilege to minister to their needs and to feel that the increased comfort of their bodies, warms their hearts towards God and man, and makes far off America seem a land of blessing to them.

"Our work has been cordially facilitated by the Government officials, Armenian church authorities and by all parties. Expressions of appreciation on the part of the Press, and of the intelligencia and leaders among the Armenians have been very gratifying in their warmth and heartiness.

(signed) SAMUEL G. WILSON.

Dr. Wilson also sends from Dilijan, a village in the Caucasus, on the 1st of March, 1916, the following admirable account of the actual work of relieving the necessities of the refugees. Giving full credit to the labors of the Russian Government, it shows how imperatively needed is the assistance of America.

Previous reports have made plain the Committee's special work—how we have contracted for or purchased large quantities of clothing and bedding in Tiflis and Erivan and sent them out to the refugees in the villages, by railroad and then by wagon and even ox-carts one hundred or two hundred versts (66.3 or 132.6 miles) from the railroad. Some further details of the distribution may be of interest to you. The distribution is made directly to the individual or families. For this purpose we use the lists which have been prepared by the Government and used in its distribution of the bread allowance. These lists need revision, for names of those who have died or removed have not always been erased. Therefore in some cases, as in the villages near Etchmiadzin, our local Committee has made a list by personal inspection. The 10,000 garments, distributed there, were made for the most part by the refugees themselves under our direction. Time did not permit this method on the large scale on which clothing was necessary.

Yesterday we fulfilled our part, several Armenians assisting me. Notice was given to the families of the refugees. They crowded around the store-room, a motley crowd, in tatters. At the door the name of the family was called out and a numbered coupon with their names and ages was placed in

their hands, the stub with the same particulars being retained. The family passed the guard and gave over the coupon. One of us attended to the father; others to the mother and the children. A comforter was spread on the floor and the garments quickly thrown down upon it. It was a pleasure to see the smile of delight on the face of a little girl as a bright dress was handed down for her, or to hear the chuckle of a wee fellow when he realized that the red shirt was for him. Nor did they forget to thank the donors, often with a prayer, "God bless you," "God save you in his heavenly kingdom," "God remember the Americans who remember us," "God establish that nation." When the family allotment was complete, the four corners of the comforter were gathered up around all and the bundle carried out on the back, and the turn of the next came.

The ravages which disease has wrought, are noticeable in the fact that the children do not number as many as the grown people. Of the 234,000 refugees now enrolled in the Caucasus and Persia, but 88,000 are children under 15 years of age. There are 81,000 women and 65,000 men. Rachel is indeed weeping for her children. The young lives could not stand the hardships of the terrible flight and weeks of more terrible suffering and disease afterwards. Even adding 4,000 to 6,000 orphans who are well kept now and whose lives are brightened by kindly care, the figures show a sad loss of child life. Some were lost in the flight and since then the mothers have "sought them sorrowing." It is pathetic to read in every issue of the papers advertisements with the object of finding traces of the lost Haik or Armenuke. Stray children were gathered up and brought on in wagons by the kind-hearted Russian soldiers. Many of these are in the orphanages. Some are cared for by the soldiers. They tell of one soldier who was carrying home a lost child. Someone said to him, "Why do you take it, you have already ten at home?" He replied, "What difference will one more make? I love the little one."

Yesterday we finished with Dilhan, today with the village of Paul's Church; tomorrow we take Jarkhech, 8 miles away; then we move on to Kara Kallissa (Black Church) the centre of the Pambak district with 5,000 refugees in 26 villages.

Besides distributing clothing, we have been trying to help in various ways, as by providing extra nourishment to convalescents; and sometimes sugar and tea for the mass. It is hard for them to live on bread and water, week after week, twenty ounces of flour or 5 cents per day is the Government allowance. It does not seem much, but it reaches an aggregate of three and one half million dollars a year—certainly a generous aid to the subjects of a foreign power. Besides help to the sick in Erivan I started a number of artisans in their trades, furnishing kits of tools to carpenters, cobblers, silversmiths, etc., or by enabling a tailor to buy a machine, or giving a baker an outfit. An artist was provided with paints that he might put on canvas the grand Ararat, which has a ready sale; another obtained his desire for a number of raw sheep-skins, from which he and his wife will pull the wool, selling the hide and wool separately day by day and living on the profits. This was a man who was a well to do property owner in Van. Another was set up as a book-binder, another as a bee-trainer; another was furnished with a small sum to take a journey to find work, and he came back after a few days, smiling because he had been employed as a nurse in a hospital—a work which he had followed with Dr. Ussher in Van. Others were given fare to go to friends where they will be kept without further expense to anyone.

While I have been at work in Erivan and Dilhan, Dr. Macallum and Mr. Gracey have been doing a large work in Novo Bayazid and Akhta districts. We will unite in Kara Kallissa. Consul Smith and Mr. Hill are attending to the banking, purchasing and shipping at Tiflis.

II. The Return to Van

As shown by the following dispatch the Russian Government is now encouraging Armenian refugees from the Province of Van to return to their homes and set up agriculture once more on their desolated farms. Rev Mr. Wilson writes from the Caucasus in the middle of March:

"Events have moved rapidly since I sent my appeal of February 18th. In the month the Russian army has made splendid progress and driven the Turks back many miles beyond Erzroom and Van. The capture of Bitlis, Moosh and Mamakhatun (Derjan) has given assurance to the government, to the Armenians and to us all. **THE RETURN OF THE REFUGEES TO THE VAN PROVINCE HAS BEEN OFFICIALLY AUTHORIZED.** Men are hastening back even while the snow is on the ground. The 12,000 already there will soon be 20,000 and 30,000. Reports say: 'Men are going in large numbers.' 'Every day caravans of those returning to the fatherland enter,' via Igdir. Most of these have returned from the Erivan province to Van. Others, of whom 500 are women have settled in Alasgerd. Fifty-three hundred have gone back from the Russian Basin to the Turkish province of the same name. The Governor of Kars reports that from Olti and that region refugees are returning to the districts of Erzroom and that many of them are women and children. In Bashkala there are nearly 3,000 refugees, said to be in great wretchedness and in need of daily sustenance.

"Besides these, numbers are coming forth from their places of concealment, or from the houses of certain friendly Kurds, or from their captivity in Moslem harems. These are indeed but hundreds compared with the thousands who have been massacred or driven into the wildernesses. But it is a gratification to hear that from Sassoon 160 men come forth; that in Khanus there have appeared more than a thousand new refugees; that in Reza on the Black Sea more than 200 Armenian children were discovered after the taking of the town

by the Russians; that in Bitlis men, women and children have come forth in large numbers (2,800); that in Moosh nearly 3,000 souls have been freed. Erzroom seems to have been dealt with most savagely. Less than 200 Armenians out of 20,000 in the city itself escaped death or deportation, that is, exile. Of these thirty were saved in the house of Mr. Stapleton. The Armenians report that when the Moslems came and demanded that these girls be delivered over to them, Mr. Stapleton replied, 'You must kill me before you can touch them.' Recent reports say that in the villages around Erzroom, Armenian women and children are appearing, singly and in groups, and are in the greatest need. Whose heart is not moved with pity for and desire to preserve these remnants who have escaped from the greatest destruction! Our opportunity is a wonderful one, to save the remnant, to aid in the restoration, to prepare for the return of the 200,000 fugitives now in Persia and the Caucasus.

"Our call to help is both general and specific. A specific and unusual call has reached us from the Russian Governor of Van, Mr. Alfred Teremin.

Now we have telegraphed the Governor that we are coming, as we telegraph the American Committee of our entrance upon the new work. Fortunately we have a considerable balance on hand and we are going in the faith that America will support us generously. Large funds will be necessary, to put roofs over the heads of the people, to supply seed-corn, plows, oxen, carts, etc.; to set at work carpenters, blacksmiths and other artisans; to help the most needy till harvest time. We will buy the necessary things here, or in Persia or from the Kurds, and will do our part in assisting the returning exiles to cultivate their fields, so that harvest may be abundant. Fortunately the time of spring sowing in the highlands of Armenia does not close till June, so we have yet time. A letter from Van says, "The important thing is that material help should be received

QUICKLY. If delayed, it will lose half its value. It is necessary to hasten. Every day is precious."

Yours respectfully,

(Signed) S. G. Wilson.

If this movement permanently succeeds the number of those in the Cau-

casus who need relief will rapidly decrease and many of the wounds made by the Great War will be healed. In that case the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief can give an increasing share of attention to those sufferers in Syria and Mesopotamia, whose plight is still most desperate.

III. Hardships of the Syrians in Persia

The Christians who are now in such great destitution around Urumia, Tabriz, and Salmas have been brought more closely in contact with war than their brothers farther west. Since the beginning of the war they have been between the upper and nether millstones of two hostile armies and now present a pitiful sight. The Russians and Turks have fought back and forth across the northern frontiers of Persia since the war began. Even before Turkey and Russia were formally at war the Kurds attacked Urumia unsuccessfully. A month later war was declared between the two nations and the Russians expelled the Kurds from Urumia, Tabriz, Khoi, and the environs. At once the Turks drove out thousands of Christians from the adjoining provinces of Turkey. These exiles fled and settled in the villages from which the Kurds had been expelled. Later the Russians had to withdraw from all these towns except Khoi and the Turks came in. Attacks on the Armenians and of the Nestorian or "Syrian" Christians then began in this territory with astounding fierceness. A report from persons on the spot when the Turks came describes the situation thus:

"On the one hand the Kurds were pouring into the plain urged on and followed by Turkish officers and troops; on the other hand, the Moslem villagers set to work robbing and looting, killing men and women and outraging the women.

"Several thousand found refuge with friendly Mohammedans. Great credit is due to no small number of Moslems, most of them humble villagers and some men of higher rank, who protected the imperiled Christians. In some cases safety was bought by professing Mohammedism. Many died as martyrs to their

faith. In several places the Christians defended themselves but the massacring was not confined to these. Villages that deliberately gave up their arms and avoided any conflict suffered as much as those that fought. The mass of the people fled to the city and all including the city people took refuge in the Mission compounds. The French Roman Catholic Mission sheltered about 3,000 and the compounds of the American Presbyterian Mission about 17,000. The latter were enlarged by joining neighboring yards and so enclosing in one connected compound with but one gate for entrance and exit, some fifteen to twenty yards. The American flag was placed over the compounds of the American Mission and here people were safe from massacre. The villages in the meantime with three or four exceptions were the prey of plunder and destruction. Everything movable that possessed the least value was either carried away or destroyed."

Prior to the Turkish evacuation of Urumia which took place on the 20th of May 1915 massacres occurred in various regions. The Rev. Dr. ——— a missionary from Urumia, writing on Nov. 8, 1915, gives the following striking testimony as to the reality of massacres perpetrated in April:

"Yesterday I went to the Kalla of Ismael Agha and from there Kasha, and some men went with me up the road to the place where the Gawar men were murdered by the Turks. It was a gruesome sight! Perhaps the worst I have seen at all. There were seventy-one or two bodies; we could not tell exactly because of the conditions. It is about six months since the murder. Some were in fairly good condition—dried, like a mummy. Others were torn to

pieces by the wild animals. Some had been daggered in several places, as evident from the cuts in the skin. The most of them had been shot. The ground about was littered with empty shells. It was a long way off from the Kalla, and a half hour's walk from the main road into the most rugged gorge I have seen for some time. I suppose the Turks thought no word could get out from there—a secret, solitary, rocky gorge. How those three wounded men succeeded in getting out and reaching the city is more of a marvel than I thought it was at the time. The record of massacre burials now stands as follows:

“At Charbash, forty in one grave, among them a bishop. At Guelpashen, fifty-one in one grave, among them the most innocent persons in the country; and now, above the Kalla of Ismael Agha, seventy in one grave, among them leading merchants of Gawar.

“These one hundred and sixty-one persons, buried by me, came to their death in the most cruel manner possible, at the hands of regular Turkish troops in company with Kurds under their command.”

The dark clouds of massacre are occasionally illuminated by individual heroism. Harry P. Packard, M. D., of the American Hospital in Urumia, Persia, reports the two following incidents of Christians who suffered for their faith in the year 1915.

“From the village of Abdulla Kandi near Urumia Lake a priest fled with his people. They were surrounded by Moslems and herded to a mosque and crowded in to be compelled to become Mohammedans. Many had been forced within the doors of the mosque and the good priest was led to the door and told that he must enter and become a Moslem. He said, ‘I am ready for the knife or the bullet, but I will never deny Christ.’ They fell on him with their daggers and stabbed him down at the door of the mosque.

“Olga was the eleven year old daughter of an Old Nestorian pastor and lived in the village of Ardeshai, down near the Lake at the mouth of the Baranduz River. Some seventy people

in her village were killed and she was taken by another tribe of Kurds and carried away to the region of Ushnuh. Here she was urged to accept Islam and go to a Kurdish husband. She stoutly refused. Day after day her captors came to her to see if she had changed her mind and had finally become willing to be a Moslem, but her courage increased each time she refused. They decided that she would never consent and finally poisoned her. The common poison used in this country is murg-i-mush (death to mice, though we would say Rough on Rats), arsenic, which produces the same symptoms as the fearful disease cholera.

The majority of the Nestorians escaped massacre but their plight was nevertheless desperate. The following extract from a missionary's letter dated January, 1916, shows vividly the suffering of the children.

“Today is a wet, shivery, snowy day, the first wintery day we've had, and in every one of the score or more of villages round about us are thousands of shivering, naked children huddled close together in dark, airless cellars, in stables, in partly enclosed balcony-like places, grateful for a scrap of dry bread. Hundreds are still lying sick with this same dry bread as their only nourishment, and these miserable holes as their only homes; until we who have seen so much of it all thru this awful year have almost ceased to feel even a pang at the sight of the long rows of graves in the village cemeteries. Personally, I feel it a cause of thanksgiving that there are several thousands less of children than there were last New Year to suffer the miseries of hunger, cold, sickness and exile.”

Relief work was taken up promptly by the missionaries who mortgaged every available resource in order to feed the fugitives. Soon after the Russian armies returned to Urumia the Imperial Government began to issue an indispensable, though not all together adequate, allowance of food. To meet the exigencies of the situation at Salmas during the Autumn of 1915 the missionaries who act as agents for our

Committee kept ten thousand people alive for a month on ten thousand dollars, one dollar a head. The far lower standards of value in Persia give a dollar far more purchasing power than it has in America, and especially about harvest time grain is cheap. For one dollar a month it was possible to supply that minimum of bread and salt which makes the difference between life and death.

News from Persia comes in slowly. Letters are many weeks under way. Each report shows how inadequate previous attempts at relief have been. As tabulated in our Fourth Bulletin the grand total of persons assisted in Persia in November and December, 1915, was 60,012. We have revised statistics for Salmas only which indicate that in this district at the beginning of March the number of refugees needing assistance had decreased about 4000. This may be due to migration or alleviated conditions, but probably disease and death

is the chief factor in reducing the number.

The Rev. E. W. McDowell of Salmas writes on Feb. 26th, and on March 6, 1916, that he has in Salmas and environs alone 17,700 refugees under his personal supervision. They are distributed as follows: Salmas proper, 10,985, with one village yet to be heard from; Khoi, 3200; Albak and Bashkala 3500. These statistics are based upon a new listing of the refugees. To them has been distributed some 4000 quilts and a little clothing. He needs more money to buy seed wheat and farm animals. He plans to assign one yoke of oxen to every four houses for their common use, and then to claim the animals in the Fall and trade them for grain. This plan gives the refugees the labor of the oxen during the summer and relieves them of their support next winter. As the oxen will be traded for grain after the harvest is in and grain is cheap it should be possible to secure in this way large quantities of food for the winter months.

IV. Missing Nestorian Group Reported Massacred

In the summer of 1914 the Nestorian or Syrian Christians lived in several groups near the boundary of Turkey and Persia.

The group in the mountains of Kurdistan is represented by the 15 or 20 thousand survivors who found an asylum on the plains of Salmas, Persia in October, 1915. Their story is related by Mr. Shimmon in his article entitled "The Fate of the Syrians" published in Ararat, November, 1915, and also in his article reprinted from the Churchman of March 4, 1916; also in his Pamphlet entitled "Massacres of Syrian Christians in N. W. Persia and Kurdistan" (Milwaukee: The Young Churchman Co.).

The second Nestorian group consisting of about 30,000 of the residents of Urumia in Persia suffered terribly during the Turkish occupation of that city from January 2d to May 20, 1915, and is thrillingly described in the *War Journal of a Missionary in Persia*, edit-

ed by Mary Schaeffer Platt (published by the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A., 156 Fifth Ave., New York).

The third group of Nestorians consisted of perhaps 30,000 who inhabited the valley of the Tigris near Mosul and north-west of that city. When our fourth Bulletin went to press at the beginning of April no tidings concerning them had reached America. Apparently the fate of this large number was unknown to any one and all efforts had ominously failed to ascertain whether they had succeeded in escaping as had the other two groups, or whether, being far in the interior, they had not been wiped out before they could reach the frontier. The mystery of this lost 30,000 has now been explained.

There was then on the way a letter from the Rev. E. W. McDowell of Salmas, Persia, dated March 6, 1916, and only recently received in this country.

It is based upon the story of a young man personally known to Mr. McDowell and is confirmed by a woman had barely escaped with her life from the region in question. It tells of the general massacre of many, or perhaps nearly all, of the third group of Nestorians who lived in the Bohtan-su region, or the valley of the Tigris, between Diarbekir and Mosul (opposite the ruins of Nineveh). Among the chief settlements are Jezireh-Ibn-Omar, about 85 miles in a straight line northwest of Mosul, and Monsoria (Mansuria) which lies across the Tigris a little upstream from Jezireh, also Shakh, situated about 30 miles ENE. of Jezireh.

"There was a general massacre in the Bohtan region and our helpers, preachers, teachers and Biblewomen, with their families, fell as victims also of this massacre. The man who brought the word is known to me personally. This young man tells the story how by order of the government the Kurds and Turkish soldiers put the Christians of all those villages, including Jezireh to the sword. Among those slain were, Kasha (pastor) Mattai, pastor of the church in Hassan; Kasha Elea, one of our oldest and most honored pastors, recently working as an evangelist; Kasha Sargis, superannuated; Muallim Musa, pastor of our church in Jezireh and his sixteen year old son Philip. There are three preachers not heard from, one of them probably killed as his village, Monsoria, was put to the sword; another Rabi Ishak, possibly is alive as there is a report that this village had been preserved by the influence of a Kurdish agha. It is to be feared, however, that this agha would not be able to protect them for long as from every source comes the word that the government threatened such friendly Kurds with punishment if they did not obey orders. The third man is reported as having fled to Mosul. Whether he reached there or not is not known. The women and children who escaped death were carried away captive. Among these were the families of the above mentioned brethren: the wife and twodaughters of Muallim Musa, the daughters of Kasha Elea, Rabi Khatoon our Biblewoman, were all school girls

in Urumia or Mardin. Kasha Mattai was killed by Kurds in the mountain while fleeing. Kasha Elea and Kasha Sargis with other men of the village of Shakh were killed by Turkish soldiers who had been stationed in their village by the government.

"The three villages of Hassan, Shakh and Monsoria were Protestant and it is to be feared that they were wiped out, as were all the other Christian villages of the plain. Many of the women of Monsoria threw themselves into the river to avoid falling into the hands of the Kurds. Mar Yokhanan and Mar Akha were still safe at the time—fled. The terrible feature about it was that after the first slaughter there were Kurds who tried to save some of the Christians alive but the government would not permit it. — had found refuge with an agha and was working for him when a messenger from the government came with orders to the Kurds to complete the work or be punished. Word was brought to — in the field and he with a few others fled to the mountain and made their way to Van and so came here. The villages of Attil where also we had work all escaped to Van. Their Kurdish agha who was a warm friend of our preacher and of our work gave them warning that he would not be able to protect them as the massacre was being pressed by the government. It was their pastor who fled to Mosul. His way would take him to Jezireh and Monsoria, the home of his wife. They may have been killed there. There is no word about them.

"This terrible calamity grieves me more than I can tell you. And more than those who died, the fate of those carried off into captivity weighs upon me. I think of them so often, Sarah, Khatoon, Priskilla and little Nellie and others, young girls whom I knew in the home almost like my own children. What is their condition? This word of — is confirmed by a woman of Jezireh who made her escape also to Van and to here. She tells us that Sarah and her two daughters were released and were last seen on the plain beyond Jezireh, wandering in a destitute condition."

V. Relief Work in the Turkish Empire

1. The Extent of the Catastrophe.

The most extensive and most difficult work carried on by the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief lies within the borders of the Turkish Empire. Here, in January 1915, the Armenians numbered between sixteen hundred thousand and two million. Precise statistics do not exist. The estimates of the Turkish Government are usually considered to be too low and those of the Armenian Patriarchate sometimes too high, suggesting a tendency in the one case to minimize and in the other to exaggerate the size and consequent importance of the Armenian population.

Twelve months later, in January, 1916, from one third to one half of the Armenians in Turkey had fallen victims of deportation, disease, starvation or massacre.

As we note from a letter of Dr. Wilson, dated Erivan, Russian Caucasus, February 4, 1916, there were then 182,800 Armenian refugees in the Caucasus and 12,100 in the districts of Turkey then conquered by the Russians. The subsequent extension of the Russian conquests toward the West and South have brought to light numbers of Armenians, who were in hiding (see dispatch printed on p. 7). At the end of 1915, there were also 9,000 Armenian refugees in Salmas, Persia.

All these statistics are subject to fluctuation due to the removal of the refugees from one region to another and also to the varying dates on which the enumerations or estimates were made. Bearing these critical considerations in mind we may tabulate the best figures as follows:

Aleppo, Damascus, Zor.....	486,000
Refugees in other parts	
of Turkey.....	300,000
Russian Caucasus.....	182,800
Armenians in districts of Turkey	
conquered by Russia.....	12,100
Armenians in Salmas, Persia...	9,000
	989,900

Constantinople and Smyrna, perhaps 150,000 in all, we can perhaps estimate the total number of survivors at under 1,150,000. If we accept the estimate that the Armenian population of Turkey at the beginning of 1915 was between 1,600,000 and 2,000,000 we should compute the number of deaths at between 450,000 and 850,000. We shall probably be safe in saying that the Armenian dead number at least 600,000.

Six hundred thousand men, women and children died within a year. There was recently held in New York City a Preparedness Parade, which marched up Fifth Avenue twenty abreast and took about thirteen hours to pass a given point. From 10 A.M. till well into the evening, this great army of over 125,000 continued to tramp up the street. If the Armenian men, women and children who died in Turkey within a twelvemonth should rise again and march in solemn procession to beg the assistance of the American people for their surviving brothers, the procession would not be 125,000 but 600,000, four times as long. Marching twenty abreast it would take two days and two nights to pass Great Reviewing Stand.

The mortality was higher in some regions than in others. From certain Armenian villages in the neighborhood of Harpoot (Kharput), whose population was about two thousand, only fifteen and two-tenths per cent. reached the goal of their deportation. Even if we make generous allowance for the number of men from these villages, who may be still alive in the army, and for the women and children, who may have saved their lives by becoming Moslems, the mortality is unspeakably high. From other regions perhaps twenty-five per cent. have reached their goal after marching hundreds of miles across the mountains down into the hot plains. From those portions of Asia Minor which are so situated that the railway could assist in the deportation, the percentage of loss of life was far smaller,

If we may add to these numbers the undeported Armenian populations in

though here insufficient food and insanitary concentration camps have swollen the tolls of death. Especially from the cities on or near the coast of Cilicia, namely Mersina, Tarsus and Adana, the deportation did not involve great loss of life. The Armenian inhabitants of Constantinople and of Smyrna, who really live in those cities and had not recently moved thither from the country, have not been deported.

Consequently the total number of surviving Armenians in Turkey is greater than our Committee had feared. The fact that there are more survivors than we at first believed obliges us to enlarge our relief work till it becomes adequate to the crisis.

3. The Needs of the Survivors.

Mr. W. W. Peet, Business Agent and Treasurer of the four Turkish Missions of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions with headquarters at Constantinople, has sent information received by the State Department on the 17th of March, to the effect that there are at least eight hundred thousand refugees in Turkey who need help. One half or more of these are reported by the American Consul at Aleppo to be in the districts of Damascus, Zor and Aleppo.

The general direction of deportation as indicated by the arrows on the map has been to force the exiles to go by train or on foot to the neighborhood of Aleppo, whence they have been distributed in two directions. One of these is the region served by the Hedjaz Railway, built a few years ago to meet the needs of the Moslem pilgrims to Mecca. The station of Ma'an near the ruins of the ancient city of Petra, the point beyond which the Hedjaz Railway has always declined to transport Christians, is the Southernmost point where Armenian exiles are to be found.

The other territory to which large numbers of exiles have been deported is the region of Deir-el-Zor on the Euphrates, six days journey east-south-east of Aleppo. The Armenians have had to walk thither from Aleppo, though some of them struck across by

a more direct route from the Armenian cities on the North.

The American Consul at Aleppo, J. B. Jackson, Esq., forwarded on the 8th of February the following statistics of the refugees in the Aleppo district. As this Bulletin goes to press the summaries are the most recent and the most accurate available in America:

"I have the honor to transmit herewith a copy of a report received from reliable sources in reference to the number of Armenian immigrants in this vicinity, between here and Damascus and in that surrounding country, and down the Euphrates river as far as Deir-el-Zor, showing a total of about 500,000 persons. In connection with the relief sent by Mr. Peet for these people it would seem proper to state that the sum of 500 pounds Turkish weekly is entirely inadequate to aid even a small part thereof, in fact as a person cannot live on less than 2 gold piasters per day, it will require the sum of 10,000 pounds Turkish (about \$44,000) a day to keep those alive who are in good health, to say nothing for the ill.

"The following is the statistics of Armenian immigrants according to the best information to Feb. 3, 1916:

Damascus as far as Ma'an, more than....	100,000
Hama and surrounding villages.....	12,000
Homs and surrounding villages.....	20,000
Aleppo and surrounding villages.....	7,000
Maara and surrounding villages.....	4,000
Bab and surrounding villages.....	8,000
Mumbidge and surrounding villages.....	5,000
Ras-el-Ain and surrounding villages.....	20,000
Rakka and surrounding villages.....	10,000
Deir-el-Zor and surrounding villages, more than.....	300,000
Total	486,000

A cablegram was received through the Department of State, on May 15th, from reliable representatives of the Committee in Turkey. It was the first news they had sent for nearly a month. Dated May 4th, but was delayed in transmission, it makes clear the situation at that date:

"ALEPPO. Relief work here supports 1,350 orphans, which is only a portion of the destitute children now

in the city. It also furnished food to families in nine destitute centers, including Hamarakkakillis and Damascus. Fifteen hundred Turkish pounds (\$6,600) monthly is being used at Aleppo for orphans; six hundred pounds (\$2,640) is being used for the poor of Aleppo; twenty-two hundred forty-five Turkish pounds (\$9,878) are being used in the destitute centers. This is considered as a minimum allotment, and ten times the amount would not meet the full needs. The work is being overseen by the German and American Consuls. So insufficient are the funds that many exiles in the destitute places have only grass to eat and they are dying of starvation by hundreds. One thousand Turkish pounds (\$4,400) are required each week for Aleppo center.

"MARASH. Ten thousand Armenians are threatened with deportation and all are in most needy condition. Attempted industrial assistance for Moslems and Christians was stopped by Government. Christians are not allowed to do any business, and the price of food is very high. Export from Agno to Marash has been forbidden, and many people are dying of starvation. Sixteen hundred Turkish pounds (\$7,040) are needed here monthly.

"AINTAB. Forty-five hundred Armenians remain here, two-thirds of whom are on relief lists. Four hundred refugee women and children in city and neighborhood ask one thousand Turkish pounds (\$4,400) each month.

"TARSUS. This being a station on the route taken by the exiles from the region north of Tarsus, the roads are always full of people in miserable condition. According to Government estimates 92,000 exiles have passed through Tarsus, while according to other reports the number is much larger. Typhus is very prevalent. The needs here require five hundred Turkish pounds (\$2,200) a month.

"ADANA. The situation here in general resembles that at Agno, with the special feature that many children need to be saved and fed. Five hundred Turkish pounds (\$2,200) monthly are needed.

"SIVAS. In addition to the local Christian population remaining here 25,000 destitute refugees including women and children from coast cities have been added. All need help. Monthly requirements six hundred Turkish pounds (\$2,640).

"KONIA. Two thousand orphans. Fifteen hundred Turkish pounds (\$6,600) monthly required for the needs of this city and neighboring places.

"HARPOOT. This place asks for four hundred Turkish pounds (\$1,760) monthly.

"MARSOVAN and CESAREA. Five hundred Turkish pounds (\$2,200) monthly are needed.

"SMYRNA. There has been much sickness here and there is scarcity of food. Four hundred Turkish pounds (\$1,760) monthly needed.

"BROUSA. Two hundred Turkish pounds (\$800) monthly are being used here."

Fortunately in this work the American consul at Aleppo, Mr. Jackson, has the co-operation of the German consul, Mr. Roessler.

Certain members of the American Committee have for months felt great anxiety as to the condition of the nearly 500,000 exiles distributed to the region east and south of Aleppo. Details as to their condition have been hard to secure. Now we know what we had suspected before: that many exiles have only grass to eat and hundreds are dying daily of starvation.

4. The Way for Relief is Now Open.

In 1915, the Turkish Government declined to give cordial co-operation in the work of relieving the necessities of the Armenians. The authorities at Constantinople did not wish to have the Armenians helped by foreigners, because they thought it might encourage some of them in treasonable hopes. Constantinople therefore favored having the relief money distributed through Turkish officials.

According to the New York Times of the 19th of October, 1915 the Turkish Government informed the State Department at Washington that the American Red Cross would not be permitted to

send surgeons and nurses to the aid of the Armenians in the Turkish Empire. The Turks barred not merely American Red Cross surgeons, nurses and relief agents, but also all other neutral foreigners.

Early in 1916 some obstacles have fallen. On March 23, 1916, Mr. Phillips, the American Chargé at Constantinople sent on behalf of the Constantinople Chapter of the Red Cross the following significant cablegram to the Secretary of State:

"Turkish Government now welcomes help and through Minister of Interior authorizes American Red Cross, co-operating with Red Crescent, to conduct relief work for civilians of all races. Great suffering throughout country, particularly at Constantinople and suburbs along the shores of Marmora, at Adrianople, Brousa and Smyrna. These regions five hundred thousand, not

comprising Armenian refugees, need help for bread. Hundreds dying of starvation. No relief in sight. Sugar, petroleum oil at famine prices. Typhus is spreading, high mortality. For immediate relief fifty thousand dollars estimated required for Constantinople Chapter administration before May first to procure foodstuffs. For more permanent relief suggest importation supplies by sea from Roumania and America. Neutrality guaranteed by American Red Cross to Entente Powers. Distribution controlled by Constantinople Chapter through agencies, soup kitchens and dispensary. Some can pay cost price and industrial work proposed for others."

In answer to this appeal, certain friends of our Committee raised \$60,000.00 and transmitted it to Constantinople, to be distributed by the Turkish Red Crescent for sufferers in Turkey, regardless of religious barriers.

V. Financial Statement

Treasurer's Report, May 18, 1916:

Total Receipts to Date	\$639,235.97
Relief rendered to date:	
Constantinople	\$255,000.00
Constantinople (Armenian Patriarch)	30,242.91
Cairo	6,374.00
Tiflis, Russia	219,947.96
Tabriz, Persia	100,110.00
Special in U. S. A.	100.00
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	\$611,774.87
Expenses to date	16,106.82
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Balance undistributed....	\$11,354.28

The expenses of the campaign in America are covered by a special appropriation by a member of the Committee, so that one hundred cents of every dollar contributed by the public may be transferred by cable.

In the above total are included eight appropriations aggregating \$230,000, made by The Rockefeller Foundation.

The total given by churches and individuals is therefore \$409,235.97.

A nation of more than 100,000,000 has responded to the greatest tragedy in modern history by giving less than one-half cent per capita.

\$52,800 A Month the Minimum.

Minimum relief in dollars needed per month in twelve centers of Turkey, covering only a part of the territory in which there are thousands appealing for relief, and not mentioning Persia and Syria.

Aleppo	
Orphans	\$6,600
Poor	2,640
Nearby centers	9,680
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	18,920
Marash	7,040
Aintab	4,400
Tarsus	2,200
Adana	2,200
Sivas	2,640
Konia	6,600
Harpoot	1,760
Marsovan	2,200
Cesarea	2,200
Smyrna	1,760
Brusa	880
	<hr/>
	\$52,800

One dollar will keep ten persons alive for one week.

Contributions for the work of the Committee should be sent to Charles R. Crane, Treasurer, The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief

70 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

Including Work of the Armenian Relief, the Persian War Relief, and the Syrian-Palestine Relief Committees

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Auxiliary Committees have been formed in over sixty of the leading cities of the United States. The list is expanding rapidly. Among the centres organized are:

Concord, N. H.; Boston and Springfield, Mass.; Hartford, Conn.; Buffalo, New York City and Rochester, N. Y.; Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, Pa.; Atlanta, Ga.; Cincinnati, Columbus, Dayton and Toledo, Ohio; Indianapolis, Ind.; Detroit, Mich.; Chicago, Ill.; Milwaukee, Wis.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Kansas City and St. Louis, Mo.

Previous Bulletins have been published on the following dates: Oct. 4, 1915 (galleys only); Jan. 25, Feb. 21, April 5, 1916. Compiler of the present number: William Walker Rockwell.

If you wish to secure speakers, or hints on organizing a campaign, write to Walter H. Mallory, Assistant Secretary, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City. He can also supply free literature, including comprehensive pamphlets, news bulletins, circulars, and posters.

The Committee urges immediate attention to this pressing need, and asks that all contributions be sent to Mr. Charles R. Crane, Treasurer, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York.